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ABSTRACT

An evaluation study was conducted to determine the effects of a two day Equal Opportunity Workshop held at the Aerospace Corporation in 1980. Information gathered before and after the workshop regarding participants' attitudes in three areas: (1) human relations; (2) status quo vs. changes in the company affirmative action practice; and (3) sexism and racism. The preworkshop survey results showed that participants had a positive attitude toward human relations. In their attitude toward change as opposed to status quo, however, 24 percent were not inclined to challenge policies that conflicted with their own values, and a comparable percentage indicated a sense of powerlessness and fear regarding changes. In the area of racism and sexism, 40 percent did not feel women were being discriminated against, one-third felt that women and minorities were already given equal opportunity, and 30 percent felt more comfortable working with people like themselves. The post workshop test did not indicate any substantial attitudinal shifts. In order to effect attitudinal changes in a corporate setting, one must thus go beyond a workshop approach. (Author/APM)

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A STUDY OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ATTITUDE CHANGES AT THE AEROSPACE CORPORATION

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The Aerospace Corporation is a non-profit private institution with over 4,000 employees. It is a high-technology company providing systems engineering to the U.S. Air Force Space Division. Over half of the employees are Members of the Technical Staff (MTS), and the majority possessing advanced degrees in engineering and the sciences. At least one third of them having fifteen or more years of experience.

The Aerospace Corporation takes a proactive approach in matters dealing with affirmative action/equal opportunity issues. The company is predominantly white and male. A breakdown by sex showed that approximately 31% of the employees are female, minority groups are represented mainly by three groups of people; the Asian-Americans (8%), Blacks (7%), and Hispanics (4%).

There are four affirmative action groups in the company; the Aerospace Women's Committee, Aerospace Asian-American Association, Black Caucus, and Hispanic Caucus. The three minority groups send representatives to the Affirmative Action Committee (AAC).

The AAC is the official body which is chaired by one of the four corporate vice-presidents. The Executive Council, chaired by the president, designates the chairman of AAC as well as two representatives from management. In addition, the committee has three representatives from the personnel division, three representatives from the three technical groups (Programs, Engineering, and Development), and two representatives from the Aerospace Women's Committee.

The committee meets once a month, overseeing the implements of action-oriented programs. It designates work to subcommittees which study, organize and recommend goals, timetables, and statistical requirements to the AAC.

The Company has been fairly successful in meeting government requirements and in developing programs which would meet the spirit and letter of affirmative action regulations. One of the activities of the Affirmative Action office is to sponsor an annual workshop to address affirmative action concerns and to effect changes in employee attitudes.

This paper presents the results of an evaluation study of a two-day Equal Opportunity Workshop held in March 1980. The co-chairs of this workshop were chief of Corporate Planning and the Administrator of Electronics and Optics Division. The workshop participants consisted of ninety-five managers and employees from the technical and administrative areas of the Company. As a means of measuring the effectiveness of the workshop, an evaluation study was conducted to measure attitudinal changes. The measurement tool used in the study was a 22-item survey, designed to measure participants' attitudinal changes in three areas: human relations, status quo vs. changes in company affirmative action practice, and sexism and racism. Workshop participants were asked to respond to statements pertinent to these areas on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagreeing designated by the value of (1), disagreeing (2), neutral (3), agreeing (4), to strongly agreeing (5). Examples of statements used in the survey are:

"There is not much chance that management will really do anything to make this company a better place to work for minorities and women."

"For a well functioning society, it behooves us to establish different roles for men and women."

The survey was distributed to the participants one week before the workshop and again at its conclusion. Of the 95 participants, 87 responded, yielding a response rate of 92 percent. Since the survey was conducted on an anonymous basis, matching of results was not possible. Thus the before and after differences should be interpreted with this limitation in mind. In addition, it should be noted that the participants did not represent a random sample. They were selected from three groups to acheive some degree of a representativeness: (1) managers with no previous workshop exposure, (2) selected minority and women representatives, and (3) members of the company Affirmative Action Committee.

The workshop participants were fairly representative of the overall population. Over half of the participants surveyed were members of the technical staff and 68 percent were males. In terms of ethnic background, the majority were white (77 percent); the minority groups were represented by Asian Americans (8 percent), Blacks (8 percent), and Hispanics (7 percent). The age distribution was fairly representative of the overall population of the company, with the 45-54 age group being the largest (41 percent), followed by the 35-44, 55 and over, and the 25-34 age group.

Among the three areas surveyed pre-workshop results showed that the participants had a rather positive attitude toward human relations.

In the area of attitude towards change as opposed to status quo, 24 percent were reluctant to accept change in the company's promotion practices and other established policies and procedures, and 43 percent were not favorably inclined to challenge any established policies that might conflict with their own values. A comparable percentage indicated some sense of powerlessness and fear regarding possible changes in policies and practices.

In the area of sexism and racism, 40 percent did not feel that women and minorities are being discriminated against in the area of upward mobility. One-third of the respondents did not agree with the statement that women and minorities are not given the kinds of opportunity in management that is generally taken for granted by majority males. Thirty percent felt "more comfortable working with people like myself, who share the same background and interests, etc." These results suggest that the participants are probably not oriented to change.

The same test was administered after the two-day intensive awareness workshop, with the same 92 percent response rate. Results did not indicate any substantial overall attitudinal shifts. However, it was determined that statistically significant changes in attitude were observed on three of the 22 statements addressed in the survey. These results are presented in the following table. As stated earlier, responses were distributed over a five-point scale, ranging from strongly disagreeing (1), to strongly agreeing (5).

Two sample t tests on pre and post survey items

Survey Statement	D.F.	Mean Pre-Workshop	Mean Post Workshop	t
In a company workshop, I would like to zero in on my own skills and abilities rather than dwell on discussions about my own biases. (Item on Human Relations)	167	2.7927 (0.8991)	2.4712 (0.9256)	2.29*
My attitudes towards people are my own business. The company has no right to get into this area. (Item on Sexism and Racism)	172	2.2414 (1.0671)	1.8965 (0.6826)	2.54**
Affirmative Action steps to hire and promote minorities and women usually create more problems, such as poor morale or lower productivity, than they are worth. (Item on Sexism and Racism)	170	2.3529 (1.0658)	2.0115 (0.7547)	2.43*

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$

These results show that the average responses to the above three questions shifted from merely "disagreeing" before the workshop toward "strongly disagreeing" after the workshop. That is, as a result of the workshop experience, participants became more open to discussion of their feelings and biases, and they felt more positive about efforts of affirmative action programs. However the statistical analysis of the 22-item survey indicated that peoples' attitudes in the three areas measured generally remain constant with very little fluctuations. (see Appendix A)

The overall results of this study indicate that generally people believe in maintaining the status quo and resist changes that would challenge existing policies and practices. In order to affect attitudinal change in affirmative action programs in a corporate setting, one must look beyond the workshop approach. In implementing the affirmative action program, attention must be focused on organizational climate and structure. Central to the issue are some of the fundamental

elements such as supervisory support at all levels, goal integration, coordination of different groups within the company, emphasis on human resourse utilization, performance improvement and career development.

Most of the companies in this country tend to take a reactive rather than a proactive posture. Problems facing minorities and women are in part management problems, and can be viewed as such. Some managers regard these groups as protected groups which represent special interests and the inclusion of these groups is synonymous with lowering of standards. This

attitude breeds contempt and alienation as well as friction among workers. They often fail or refuse to recognize the unique talent, skills, contributions and most important of all,sensitivity of groups of people who have been discriminated against in our society. Supervisory leadership is crucial in bringing about careful planning in recruitment and career development for the majority and minority employees. This requires knowledge and understanding, attitudinal change, and behavioral manifestation.

Managers often neglect to recognize that good management requires goal integration; or the extent to which individual workers see their needs and the organizational objectives as coinciding or at odds.

Cooperation, team building, work interdependence and facilitation all require the leader to orchestrate group effort within a unit and between other units in the organization.

Companies need not take the view that federal government and the courts are impringing on the rights of private business and industry in hiring minorities and women. It is simply a matter of optimizing human resource utilization in a pluralistic society. In a free society, people should not be barred from employment for other than job related reasons. To under-utilize half of the population and sizable minority people in this country will not be practicable in today's competitive world economy.

In order to create an effective organization, one must be willing to try new

ideas, workout reasonable plans whereby all people can function as contributing members of the work force. Affirmative action should not be viewed as a program to accommodate certain segments of the population. It is a constructive force which contributes to the fundamental issue of maximum human resource utilization in a free and democratic society.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY WORKSHOP OPINIONNAIRE
(Two-Sample t Tests on Pre- & Post Studies)

HUMAN RELATIONS		PRE-	POST-	t	p VALUE	D.F.
11. Human relations training requires psychic and organizational commitments which do not warrant the amount of energy and time spent.	MEAN	2.1428	1.9770	1.21	0.229	169
	STD DEV	0.9332	0.8623			
	S.E.M.	0.1018	0.0925			
	N	84	87			
16. I feel free to express "masculine" interests (if a woman), or "feminine" interests (if a man), when so inclined.	MEAN	3.7558	3.8046	-0.37	0.715	171
	STD DEV	0.9067	0.8469			
	S.E.M.	0.0978	0.0908			
	N	86	87			
17. It is usually best to tell your superiors or bosses what they really want to hear.	MEAN	2.2758	2.3448	-0.45	0.653	172
	STD DEV	1.0264	0.9128			
	S.E.M.	0.1175	0.0979			
	N	87	87			
19. Often I think about my personal biases and how they affect my working relationship with others.	MEAN	3.6117	3.5747	0.26	0.796	170
	STD DEV	0.9010	0.9721			
	S.E.M.	0.0977	0.1042			
	N	85	87			
20. In a company workshop, I would like to zero in on my own skills and abilities rather than dwelling on discussions about my own biases.	MEAN	2.7927	2.4712	2.29*	0.023	167
	STD DEV	0.8991	0.9256			
	S.E.M.	0.0993	0.0992			
	N	82	87			

SEXISM & RACISM

		PRE-	POST-	t	p VALUE	D.F.
7. Affirmative Action and other related matters are not problems in my group.	MEAN	2.5057	2.3333	1.04	0.299	172
	STD DEV	1.1601	1.0192			
	S.E.M.	0.1244	0.1093			
	N	87	87			
8. Women and members from minority groups are not given the kind of opportunity in management that is generally taken for granted by majority males.	MEAN	3.3953	3.5781	-1.53	0.127	171
	STD DEV	1.2859	1.1360			
	S.E.M.	0.1387	0.1218			
	N	86	87			
9. My attitudes toward people are my own business. The company has no right to get into this area.	MEAN	2.2414	1.8965	2.54**	0.012	172
	STD DEV	1.0671	0.6826			
	S.E.M.	0.1144	0.0732			
	N	87	87			
18. In my group, minorities and women are not interested in management.	MEAN	1.7325	1.7011	0.27	0.784	171
	STD DEV	0.7885	0.7171			
	S.E.M.	0.0850	0.0769			
	N	86	87			
22. In the office, I am usually more comfortable working with people like myself, who share the same background and interests, etc.	MEAN	2.7126	2.8735	-1.08	0.284	172
	STD DEV	0.9754	0.9977			
	S.E.M.	0.1046	0.1070			
	N	87	87			

SEXISM & RACISM

		PRE-	POST-	t	p VALUE	D.F.
23.	In general women cannot manage, not because they lack the necessary skills, but for other reasons	MEAN	1.7674	1.7093	0.43	0.667	170
		STD DEV	0.9539	0.8097			
		S.E.M.	0.1029	0.0873			
		N	86	86			
24.	For a well functioning society, it behooves us to establish different roles for men and women.	MEAN	2.4023	2.2184	1.07	0.285	172
		STD DEV	1.2148	1.0391			
		S.E.M.	0.1302	0.1114			
		N	87	87			
26.	Affirmative Action steps to hire and promote minorities and women usually create more problems, such as poor morale or lower productivity, than they are worth.	MEAN	2.3529	2.0115	2.43*	0.016	170
		STD DEV	1.0658	0.7547			
		S.E.M.	0.1156	0.0809			
		N	85	37			

STATUS QUO

		PRE-	POST-	t	p VALUE	D.F.
5.	I am in favor of creating a task force to help design andimplement changes in this company's promotion practices.					
	MEAN	3.5402	3.7701	-1.36	0.177	172
	STD DEV	1.1494	1.0859			
	S.E.M.	0.1232	0.1164			
	N	87	87			
6.	Today's chief executives frequently attribute their rise in status to ability to work with others and to their own personal inner drive for achievement. These are not finite skills which can be easily passed on by way of education. It may well be that old saying, "Leaders are born, not made," is true.					
	MEAN	2.9762	2.9651	0.06	0.952	168
	STD DEV	1.2220	1.1926			
	S.E.M.	0.1333	0.1286			
	N	84	86			
12.	In the work environment, everyone's ego and feelings are involved and one cannot expect too much.					
	MEAN	2.6117	2.4235	1.11	0.268	168
	STD DEV	1.1243	1.0843			
	S.E.M.	0.1220	0.1176			
	N	85	85			
13.	There is not much chance that management will really do anything to make this company a better place to work for minorities and women.					
	MEAN	1.7059	1.8735	-1.27	0.206	170
	STD DEV	0.7688	0.9500			
	S.E.M.	0.0834	0.1018			
	N	85	87			
14.	It does not bother me to work under uncertain and unpredictable conditions.					
	MEAN	2.3218	2.6092	-1.72	0.088	172
	STD DEV	1.0836	1.1243			
	S.E.M.	0.1162	0.1205			
	N	87	87			

STATUS QUO

		PRE-	POST-	t	p VALUE	D.F.
15. At work, established policies and procedures currently take precedence, even though they may conflict with our own moral values.	MEAN	2.8735	2.8161	0.36	0.721	172
	STD DEV	1.0321	1.0840			
	S.E.M.	0.1107	0.1162			
	N	87	87			
21. This world is run by a few people in power and there is not much the average person can do about it.	MEAN	2.7143	2.6781	0.21	0.836	169
	STD DEV	1.1981	1.0729			
	S.E.M.	0.1307	0.1150			
	N	84	87			
25. One trouble with some people is that they stick together and connive, so that others do not have a fair chance in competition.	MEAN	2.9535	3.1839	-1.47	0.145	171
	STD DEV	1.0727	0.9945			
	S.E.M.	0.1157	0.1066			
	N	86	87			

T-SCALE

10. In order to get ahead, it is important to maximize the chances of being in the right place at the right time.	MEAN	4.2643	4.3103	-0.44	0.660	172
	STD DEV	0.7227	0.6525			
	S.E.M.	0.0775	0.0700			
	N	87	87			